

# Morrow County

## Major findings

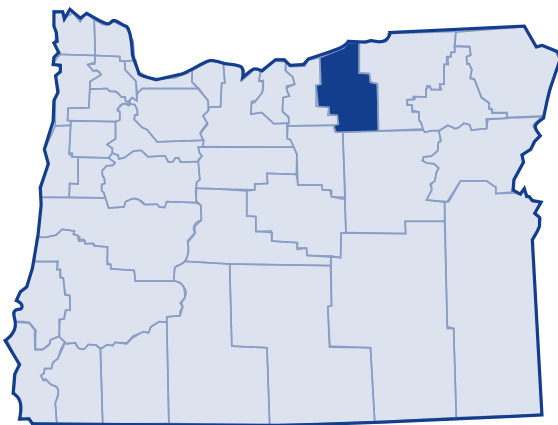
According to the 2000 US Census, overall poverty rates in Morrow County remained relatively constant between 1989 and 1999. The rate remained higher than the state and national average, however, due to increased poverty rates between 1979 and 1989.

Children, families and minorities experienced the highest rates of poverty in Morrow County. Between 1979 and 1999, children younger than 18 faced the highest poverty rate. In 1979, 11.4 percent of families with children lived in poverty. By 1999, 17.2 percent of families with children lived in poverty.

Black experienced the highest rate of poverty at 41.2 percent.

The county's unemployment rate was high in 2003, at 10.3, but this was a decrease from 2000's 11.9 unemployment rate.

In 2003, 25.4 percent of Morrow county residents received services from the Department of Human Services.<sup>1</sup>



## Low-income needs

Community Action Program East Central Oregon prioritized the needs of the low-income population in Morrow County as follows:<sup>2</sup>

- Emergency rental/transitional housing opportunities for households who are homeless or at risk of losing housing.
- Maintain access to Emergency Food Boxes and promote hunger awareness in the community.
- Continue providing access to energy assistance funds during the high-cost winter months.
- Increase access to low-cost medical care via the Oregon Health Plan; retain local medical services.
- Provide assistance for Emergency Lodging / Emergency Shelter for homeless households.
- Continue the programs that promote Early Childhood Education.
- Retain and improve transportation programs to help serve those residing in rural communities.
- Provide access to quality childcare and voucher assistance.
- Promote the development of low-income housing and create safe housing opportunities for community members.
- Access to job training opportunities to help households obtain living wage jobs.
- Expand opportunity for area residents to receive weatherization services thus providing safe and healthy living environments.
- Assist households in obtaining adequate clothing suitable for the seasonal weather conditions.
- Improve and expand counseling/family case management for households in crisis to help them become self-reliant.

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## Growth

According to the 2000 Census, Morrow County grew 44.2 percent between 1989 and 1999. The US Census Bureau determined the poverty status of 10,919 county residents and found that 14.8 percent (1,617 people) lived below the poverty threshold. This was an increase of 10.1 percent in the number of persons living in poverty (1,141 people) since 1989. The overall percent of Morrow County's population living in poverty remained relatively constant from 1989 to 1999, but the number of people living in poverty did not.

## 20-year trend

In the 20 years after 1979, the poverty rate in Morrow County increased from 10.5 percent of the population to 14.8 percent. The number of persons in poverty rose from 782 people to 1,617 people. Morrow County's poverty rates were higher than the state and national poverty rates from 1989 to 1999 due to increases from 1979 to 1989.

## Poverty and age

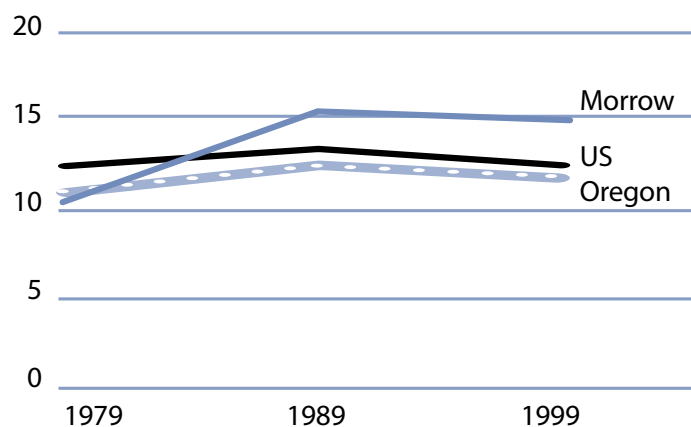
In the 2000 Census, among all age categories examined, children 5 years of age and younger experienced the highest rate of poverty at 23.7 percent. Children younger than 18 years of age experienced poverty at 22 percent. People 65 and older experienced the lowest rate: 10.1 percent. Over the 20-year period from 1979 to 1999, the rate of poverty was consistently highest for children younger than 18.

**Poverty in selected communities**  
Number of persons below poverty level  
(poverty rate)

	1989	1999	Percent Change (rate difference)
Morrow County	1,141 (15.1%)	1,617 (14.8%)	10.1% (-0.3%)
Oregon Statewide	344,867 (12.4%)	388,740 (11.6%)	12.7% (-0.8%)
United States	31,742,864 (13.1%)	33,899,812 (12.4%)	6.8% (-0.7%)

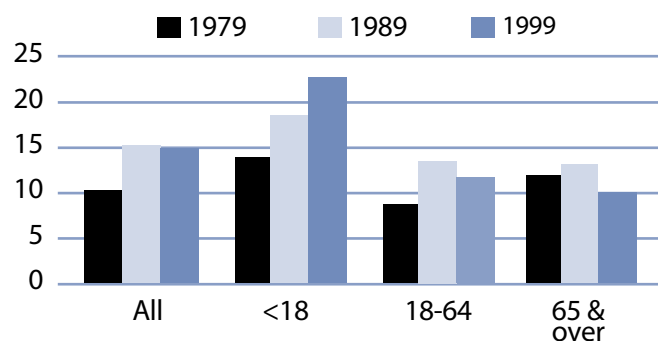
Source: US Census. County numbers have been rounded and, therefore, may not add exactly to totals.

**Poverty rates 1979-1999**



Source: US Census.

**Rate of poverty by age**



Source: US Census.

# Morrow County

## Poverty and Morrow County families

In 1999, 332 Morrow County families lived in poverty (11.3 percent). Of the families in poverty, 69.6 percent (231 families) had a worker and 24.4 percent (81 families) had a full-time year-round worker.

The poverty rate was higher for families with children. Families with at least one child younger than 18 experienced poverty at a rate of 17.2 percent. Families with a child younger than 5 years old experienced poverty at a higher rate of 21.2 percent. The rate for families with children headed by single mothers was 35.4 percent and was even higher with younger children (less than 5 years) at 45.4 percent.

The poverty rate for married couples with children younger than 18 was lower at 13.1 percent. From 1979 to 1999, the number of female-headed households with children (no husband present) who lived in poverty increased from 42 families in 1979 to 92 families in 1999.

## Poverty and race/ethnicity

Among racial/ethnic groups,<sup>3</sup> White residents comprised the majority of people in poverty at 57.6 percent. When examining poverty based on race/ethnicity, however, the poverty rate among White was 11.4 percent. Black experienced a disproportionately higher rate of poverty at 41.2 percent. From 1989 to 1999, poverty rates improved for most race categories.

## Morrow County families in poverty

Number Below Poverty Level (poverty rate)	1979			1989		1999		% Change 1979-99 (rate difference)
	1979	1989	1999	1979	1989	1979	1989	
All Families	167 (8.1%)	249 (11.9%)	332 (11.3%)					98.8% (3.2%)
With Children under 18	135 (11.4%)	182 (16.7%)	276 (17.2%)					104.4% (5.8%)
Female-headed with Children under 18	42 (37.5%)	80 (47.9%)	92 (35.4%)					119.0% (-2.1%)

Source: US Census. County numbers have been rounded and, therefore, may not add exactly to totals.

## Morrow County poverty and race/ethnicity

Race/Ethnicity	% Total 1999 Population (population)	% Poverty 1999 Population (poverty population)	Poverty Rate by Race 1999	Poverty Rate by Race 1989
White	74.9% (8,178)	57.6% (931)	11.4%	12.9%
Black	0.2% (17)	0.4% (7)	41.2%	0.0%
American Indian	1.6% (180)	1.7% (27)	15.0%	16.5%
Asian/Pacific Islander	0.5%/0.0% (56/3)	0.7%/0.0% (11/0)	19.6%/NA	30.3%*
Other	20.2% (2,207)	37.2% (601)	27.2%	36.3%
2 or More Races	2.5% (278)	2.5% (40)	14.4%	NA
Hispanic Origin	24.5% (2,672)	45.3% (732)	27.4%	33.3%

\* Asian and Pacific Islander were not separate categories in the 1990 Census.

# Morrow County

## County income

On a per capita basis, Morrow County's personal income was \$20,826 in 2002, about 72 percent of the state average of \$28,792, and 67 percent of the national average, \$30,906. Per capita income in Morrow County rose 7.6 percent between 2001 and 2002. The 10-year trend, from 1992 to 2002, of per capita income shows average annual growth of 4 percent. Average earnings per job for 2001 were \$27,943 in Morrow County compared to \$33,063 for the state.<sup>4</sup>

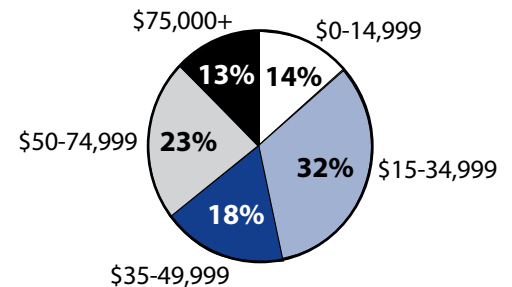
## Poverty thresholds

Segmenting census data by income reveals more detail about the people experiencing poverty in Morrow County. The 2000 Census showed that 612 people or 37.8 percent of those living below the federal poverty threshold actually earned 50 percent or less of the poverty threshold. Other segments of the population earned equal to or above the poverty level but still needed assistance. In Oregon, 185 percent of the poverty level is the income guideline used for federal food programs such as food stamps, child nutrition, and the Women, Infants, and Children program. In 1999, 36.3 percent of Morrow County's population, or 3,962 people earned below 185 percent of the poverty threshold.

## Public assistance

Participation in public assistance programs serves as an indirect measure—or indicator—of the extent of poverty and the measures taken to serve the public. According to the 2000 Census, 205 households or 5.4 percent of all households in Morrow County reported public assistance income. The average amount of public assistance income for 1999 was \$2,477. The 20-year trend showed an increase in households that reported receiving public assistance income, from 115 households or 4.3 percent of all households in 1979.

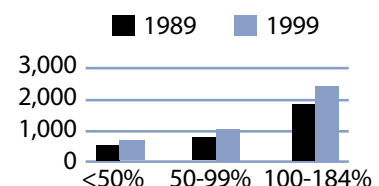
## 1999 household income distribution—Morrow County



Source: US Census.

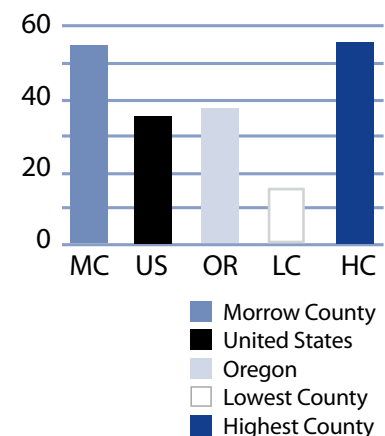
Note: The median household income in Morrow County was \$37,521 in 1999 compared to \$23,969 in 1989 (56.5 percent increase).

## Number of persons in poverty Threshold percentiles



Source: US Census.

## Public assistance in Oregon Rate per thousand population



Source: US Census.

## Basic family budget

According to US Department of Agriculture statistics released in October 1999, about 12.6 percent of Oregon households have difficulty meeting their basic need for food. This chart outlines typical expenses for four family types in Morrow County and the corresponding income those families would need to meet their expenses.

The only family that could afford the basic expenses was one in which two adults worked full-time at Morrow County's median income and had only one child.

*To learn more about this basic family budget, see Methodology and Data References section.*

## What the poverty threshold buys

Families at the poverty level in Morrow County could afford 43.5 to 47.6 percent of this basic family budget.

## Wages

According to the Oregon Employment Department, the average weekly wage in Morrow County is \$493.08. The transportation, communication and utilities had the highest weekly average of \$1,034.88 and the retail trade industry had the lowest weekly average of \$231.31.

This chart illustrates a family's ability to be self-sufficient based on earnings of average wages for Morrow County. The two-worker scenario relies on both workers earning average wages.

An adult who had three children and who worked full-time at Morrow County's average wage could not afford the basic family budget.

**Morrow County's basic family budget**

Budget/Monthly	1 Child	3 Children	1 Child	3 Children
Housing	\$477	\$657	\$477	\$657
Food	\$230	\$489	\$388	\$647
Child Care	\$363	\$810	\$363	\$810
Transportation	\$197	\$197	\$277	\$277
Health Care	\$245	\$245	\$293	\$293
Other Necessities	\$219	\$355	\$268	\$404
Taxes	\$279	\$491	\$404	\$561
<b>Basic Family Budget Needed/Monthly</b>	<b>\$2,010</b>	<b>\$3,244</b>	<b>\$2,470</b>	<b>\$3,649</b>
Basic Family Budget Total/Annual	\$24,122	\$38,932	\$29,645	\$43,792
Median Annual Income (Census 2000)	\$19,661	\$19,661	\$43,427	\$43,427
Median Family Income as % of Basic Budget	81.5%	50.5%	146.5%	99.2%

**Poverty and Morrow County's basic family budget**

Basic Family Budget/Monthly	1 Adult/ 1 Child	1 Adult/ 3 Children	2 Adults/ 1 Child	2 Adults/ 3 Children
Poverty Threshold	\$11,483	\$16,954	\$13,410	\$19,882
% of Basic Budget	47.6%	43.5%	45.2%	45.4%

**Morrow County wages and the basic budget**

	1 Worker	1 Worker	2 Workers	2 Workers
Average Monthly Wage (AMW)*	\$2,120	\$2,120	\$4,240	\$4,240
	1 Adult/ 1 Child	1 Adult/ 3 Children	2 Adults/ 1 Child	2 Adults/ 3 Children
Self Sufficiency Wage (SSW)**	\$2,010	\$3,244	\$2,470	\$3,649
Difference (SSW-AMW)	\$110	-\$1,124	\$1,770	\$591
Wage as % of Self Sufficiency	105.5%	65.4%	171.7%	161.2%

\* Source: 1999 Oregon Covered Employment and Payrolls.  
 \*\* Based on Basic Family Budget for Morrow County.

# Morrow County

Morrow County Poverty Measures	1995	2000	2001	2002	2003
Population	7,625 <sup>1</sup>	10,995 <sup>2</sup>	11,259	11,605	11,627
% of People Living Below Poverty Level	15.1% <sup>1</sup>	14.8% <sup>2</sup>	NA	NA	NA
Median Income	\$23,969 <sup>1</sup>	\$37,521 <sup>2</sup>	NA	NA	NA
Unemployment Rate	7.4	11.9	10.8	10.1	10.3
8th Grade Drug Use	17.8% <sup>3</sup>	14.0%	NA	10.0%	NA
HS Dropout	6.7% <sup>4</sup>	3.9%	2.8%	2.6%	NA
Teen Pregnancy per 1,000 Ages 10-17	25.5	15.5	16.6	8.3	NA
Prenatal Care	60.3%	67.5%	79.4%	70.8%	NA
Child Care Available per 100 Children Under 13	7.8	17.1	12	10.5	NA
Homeownership Rate	68.0% <sup>1</sup>	73.1% <sup>2</sup>	NA	NA	NA
% Renters with 30% or More Rental Burden	45.6% <sup>1</sup>	36.9% <sup>2</sup>	NA	NA	NA
Morrow County Services	1999	2000	2001	2002	2003
One Night Shelter Count	0	0	0	0	0
# of New Units Created with OHCS Funding	0	0	0	0	0
OHCS Funding for Subsidized Housing	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0	\$0
# Home Loans for Low-Income Households	9	5	5	7	3
\$ Home Loans for Low-Income Households	\$737,231	\$335,443	\$413,827	\$526,744	\$221,653
# Households Receiving Energy Assistance	NA	298	304	334	266
% of Population Enrolled in the Oregon Health Plan	NA	NA	NA	23.0%	18.1%
# Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	1,193	1,105	1,303	1,283	1,429
% Students Eligible for Free/Reduced Lunch	52.8%	49.1%	56.8%	56.5%	60.9%
% of Population Receiving Food Stamps	NA	NA	NA	17.7%	15.0%
% of Population Receiving TANF	NA	NA	NA	3.2%	2.2%
% of Population Receiving DHS Services	NA	NA	28.6%	31.0%	25.4%

<sup>1</sup> 1990 Census data, year is 1989  
<sup>2</sup> 2000 Census data, year is 1999  
<sup>3</sup> 1998  
<sup>4</sup> 1996  
 NA=Not Available

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> Oregon Department of Human Services Integrated Client Database.

<sup>2</sup> Community Action Program East Central Oregon Community Services Block Grant Work Plan for 2003-05.

<sup>3</sup> Please see Methodology and Data References section for information on Census Race/Ethnicity Categories.

<sup>4</sup> Bureau of Economic Analysis: Regional Economic Accounts.